

WOMAN'S FRIENDSHIP.

Her kindness, when of kindness sore our need.
What tongue can tell?
Her soothing accents, balm to hearts that bleed.
Our tears dispel.
Her very silence breathes a sympathy
Deeper than any utterance can be,
Our griefs to quell.

Al't that is highest, noblest, best in us,
She looks to find;
Aught else, aught base, she makes us
Emulous
To cast behind;
But when achievement lags far in the rear
Of effort, women, then, alas! we fear,
Is all too kind.

When joy is ours, that joy were less than naught
Without her smile;
Hard-earned success, with sorest struggle bought,
Were not worth while;
And life itself, were she not here to share
Its pleasures and its pains, its mirth and care.
Were drear exile.
—Percy F. Bicknell, in Overland Monthly.

A Purely Business Matter.

MR. FILLINGHAM measured all things by money; and as young Medway, who had had the temerity to fall in love with the financier's daughter, possessed but a limited portion of this universally coveted commodity, though gifted with a fair amount of brains and good looks, Mr. Fillingham's action in sternly forbidding "any more nonsense," as he unfeelingly put it, between Phyllis and the young man was perhaps justified.

It is not in the nature of things, however, for two fond hearts thus ruthlessly rent asunder to submit unquestioningly to such an unreasoning decree of fate. Within the week of the flat going forth the two had met. Not that there was anything clandestine in it. That was not young Medway's style. Walking boldly up to the forbidden Fillingham mansion one likely afternoon he had asked for the financier's daughter and had been received. For the moment parental obedience had yielded to Cupid's more resistless claims. And could Mr. Fillingham himself, five minutes later, have seen the lovely tear-stained face which looked appealingly into young Medway's he might, perhaps, have realized the utter hopelessness of attempting to change the course of true love.

"What can we do?" wept Phyllis with tear-dimmed eyes, whose beauty was still unimpaired by their grief. "Must we part for ever? Cannot you think of something, George? Surely there must be some way of—"

The tears choked further utterance and George frowned deeper in the intensity of his emotion.

"There is only one way I can think of," he replied slowly, "and that is—"

He paused and looked steadily at Phyllis, who returned his gaze with questioning eyes and red, parted lips.

"What?" she breathed eagerly.

"To elope," declared George, calmly. The beautiful eyes grew wider still in their startled gaze; then, dropping them, Phyllis hid her face in her handkerchief.

"Two hundred pounds is all I possess in this world," proceeded Medway, encouraged by these manifestations; "but I have got my wits, and with your love in the bargain, dearest, to help me through, I shall succeed." He paused, but Phyllis' face was still invisible and he proceeded in his argument.

"There is a thing I have on hand which might lead to a few extra hundreds," he declared with businesslike persuasion. "I have known of thousands made out of a poorer chance. An option to purchase some property, dearest; though, of course, you don't understand these things."

Once more he paused, but presently proceeded:

"Why should we part," he urged, "at the bidding of another who cannot appreciate our love? Why, even though it be at your father's word, should we sacrifice that which can alone make life dear to us? Speak, darling! What is your choice? To come with one who will love and cherish you till his latest breath, or—his voice shook—"to say farewell for ever?"

At this last touching appeal the little handkerchief was moved swiftly from the face; a pair of bright, trusting eyes met his for a second; then clasping her arms about his neck Phyllis hid her face on his shoulder.

"I will come," she whispered.

day. Most of them were known to Medway, keen business men who dabbled in house property, land and the flotation of companies with a zest and sharpness known only to those who had once come in contact with them, but keener and closer amongst them was Mr. Fillingham himself.

It was during the lengthy discussion after dinner over their wine and cigars of these birds of a feather that Phyllis was to forsake the paternal nest and take that flight which should make or mar her future happiness.

The details had been carefully planned and, adhering closely to these arrangements, Medway found himself in the conservatory at eight o'clock on the evening of the dinner. Five minutes later, approaching with a quick, soft tread in the semi-darkness, came Phyllis, true to her tryst.

Springing forward, Medway clasped her hands in his.

"Darling!" he whispered, joyfully. Then, amidst his elation and the trembling fears of Phyllis, they drew sharply up. Ahead from a side doorway leading to the main passage of the conservatory, down which they must pass to escape, came Mr. Fillingham's voice.

"This way, Foxbrook," they heard him say. "We shall be undisturbed here."

Still holding Phyllis' hands, Medway drew her swiftly and silently beneath the cover of some thick palms and shrubs which bordered the passage, and he had barely done so when Mr. Fillingham and Foxbrook, a co-director, and the vice chairman of Mr. Fillingham's great land syndicate, took their seat on a low iron bench not three yards away.

"What is the news, Foxbrook?" asked Mr. Fillingham, eagerly.

"Rather important to you," declared Foxbrook in his cool, deliberate way; "indeed to all of us in the syndicate. I have just learnt from Bencher that the new loop line will to a certainty go through Darnley and tap the full length of the Irwell Hall estate. He advises me, too, that we have no time to waste if the deal is to be worked, and we must buy the Irwell people up without an hour's delay."

"Decidedly," declared Mr. Fillingham. "Did you call on Mullitt and Fudge, the agents?"

"I did," replied Foxbrook, slowly. "And informed them we were disposed to treat for the estate if it were cheap. But we are too late."

"Too late!" cried Mr. Fillingham.

"That bland fool old Mullitt, who evidently knows nothing yet," rejoined Foxbrook, "informed me they would have been glad to treat with the syndicate, but they had granted an option of purchase to a person who hoped to find a buyer within the present month, provided his efforts were guaranteed by the option of the acceptance or refusal of the estate for £20,000 up to the 30th."

"Good heavens!" cried the financier. "Why the estate has gone a-begging for months, and must be trebled in value if Bencher is right. Who is the man? Can he have got wind of the thing?"

"That remains to be seen," declared Foxbrook. "You know him pretty well. It is young Medway, who was connected with us in that small affair—"

"Medway!" gasped Mr. Fillingham.

"Your Medway," declared Foxbrook, half satirically, "who was after your daughter. I could never understand why you threw such a promising young fellow over."

"And you say he has the option to purchase for £20,000 within the month?" asked Mr. Fillingham. "Why, the estate is worth £60,000 of any man's money if Bencher's information proves reliable."

"More," rejoined Foxbrook, calmly. "And Bencher is beyond doubt."

"Well, we must see Medway," asserted Mr. Fillingham.

Foxbrook laughed quietly.

"After kicking him out?" he inquired, facetiously.

"This thing is, of course, a purely business matter," replied Mr. Fillingham. "And from what I know of Medway he will treat it as such. He is poor enough. It is more than probable that he knows nothing of the real state of affairs and is just dabbling to make a small commission. We must see him at once before he gets wind of its real value. Though, of course, he is without money to buy himself."

"Pish!" said Foxbrook, contemptuously, "he will have a dozen offers within the week unless we secure him before the rush—Steinway, Goldthorpe, Phillipson and a score of others will be anxious to snap it up when the news is known. Bencher gives us only three or four days before the cat is out of the bag. But I have my doubts of young Medway. It seems odd he should have got control of the estate just at this juncture. We must get in touch with him at once. Not a minute should be lost in the morning, though we must move cautiously."

"Undoubtedly," said Mr. Fillingham. Moving away, they retired from the conservatory, leaving the two unintentional eavesdroppers once more free to follow their way. But the situation had swiftly changed.

Turning to Phyllis, Medway kissed her rapturously.

"I win!" he chuckled. "We both win—you and I, Phyllis. Quick, return at once! I have your father beneath my thumb just as he had me."

"You foresaw it all, dear—about the new line?" asked Phyllis with trembling delight.

"Not I!" laughed Medway. "I always had an idea that the estate would some day be enhanced in value and was endeavoring to persuade old Bencher to invest in it. He may say good-bye to his chance now. But I must be off. Good-night! I await your father and Foxbrook in the morning"—he snatched a kiss—"a purely business matter, darling."

In his little office, four stories up, which boasted no more than one room, and that barely large enough to swing a cat, Medway sat the following morning with an appearance of busy preoccupation, judging by the books and papers skillfully littered before him, which might have deceived more observant eyes even than those of Mr. Fillingham and Foxbrook.

Ten o'clock had barely struck, however, an early hour for men like Fillingham and Foxbrook to be afield, when he heard their voices on the creaking staircase. Bending over his desk, he applied himself with an ardor to the sheet before him that perhaps we may have all assumed at some time over an imaginary task.

His look of absent-minded industry as he glanced up at the entry of the two was worthy of a skilled actor; but rising after a look of inquiry, tinged by just the faintest touch of politely assumed surprise at the sight of Fillingham, he offered the only two chairs the office possessed.

"We shall not detain you long, Mr. Medway," rejoined the financier, declining them somewhat distantly. "Just a trifling business matter on which Mr. Foxbrook and myself, as representatives of the Suburban Land Investment and Building Syndicate, find ourselves brought in touch with you. We learn, in short, from Messrs. Mullitt and Fudge that you have been granted an option of purchase of the Irwell Hall estate for £20,000. Is that so?"

"You have been rightly informed," replied Medway.

"The estate, as you are probably aware," proceeded Mr. Fillingham, "has been on the market for a considerable time without a purchaser; but latterly our syndicate have considered the matter as to whether by careful development it might not be made to pay as a building site."

"Precisely," said Medway.

"We presume," proceeded Mr. Fillingham, "that you do not contemplate buying the estate yourself, Mr. Medway, and that you have secured the option from a speculative point of view. In short, we are disposed to purchase for £20,000, allowing you a fair percentage of commission."

"I fear not," smiled Medway, blandly. "Your surmise that I do not contemplate buying myself is entirely unfounded. I shall probably do so. Perhaps you are not aware, gentlemen, that the new line to Darnley will skirt the whole length of the estate, considerably increasing its value. I should have no difficulty in raising a £20,000 mortgage on the security of the estate alone, and I dare say Steinway or Goldthorpe would be glad to snap it up for £20,000 or £30,000."

"Nonsense!" stammered Mr. Fillingham, weakly, with a blank glance at Foxbrook. "Forty thousand? Preposterous, Mr. Medway!"

"I have it on good authority," replied Medway, coolly, "that the estate if carefully developed will be worth £60,000."

Foxbrook laughed at Mr. Fillingham's face even amidst his dismay.

"You have stolen a march on us, Medway," he declared. "Though how you got the news so early Heaven only knows! I suppose there is no chance of buying you out? Of course, the estate wants a building capital to be properly worked. Have you a price?"

"There is a price, certainly, Mr. Foxbrook," smiled Medway.

"And that?" demanded both men quickly.

"Can I rely on you to keep a secret, Mr. Foxbrook?" asked Medway.

"Decidedly," replied Foxbrook.

"Still, it is a purely business matter," observed Medway. "Ten thousand pounds down for my option, a seat on the board of your syndicate with enough shares to entitle me to that position, and the estate is yours on one other condition."

"Name it," cried Fillingham.

"That you give your consent to the marriage of Phyllis and myself."

"Bravo!" laughed Foxbrook, heartily. "A fair offer. You consent, Fillingham, of course."

Mr. Fillingham did assent, as gracefully as lay in his power. Later in the day, too, he made known the withdrawal of his objection to the radiantly happy Phyllis.

"I find, indeed, my dear," he explained, "that Mr. Medway, in an important financial matter in which we have been jointly concerned, has shown such undoubted business ability and promise that, in short, I have no further objection to your immediate marriage."—*Cassell's Saturday Journal.*



THE LIQUOR QUESTION.

Opinion of an Eminent Physician as to How It Should Be Viewed and Handled.

Why do a large majority of medical men, sanitarians and the people generally refuse to apply the same methods of reasoning and the same experimental investigations regarding the effects of alcoholic liquor on the human system as they uniformly use in relation to the effects of all other drugs? When it is found that the unrestrained exposure of arsenic, opium, morphine, strychnine, cocaine and carbolic acid in drug stores and dispensaries results in an occasional death from the accidental taking of a dose of arsenic or strychnine, or a designed dose with suicidal intent, the unanimous expression is that they are dangerous drugs and their sale should be restricted. And when it is seen that the unrestricted sale of opium, morphine, cocaine and carbolic acid results in an occasional death from accidental doses, and a much larger number of deaths by their designed use for suicidal purposes, and that a much larger number still become habitual opium, morphine or cocaine users, by which their health and self-control are entirely destroyed, the emphatic expression of all classes is that these drugs are poisons dangerous to the public health and morals, and their sale is rigidly prohibited, except on physicians' prescriptions, and then to be plainly labeled "Poison."

But when it is seen, day by day, that the daily use of alcoholic liquors, even in small quantities, soon creates, in a large proportion of those who use them, an uncontrollable desire for more, until their higher mental faculties of sense and propriety and self-control are paralyzed and their physical functions disordered, in which condition they are far more dangerous to themselves, their families and to the community at large than the most inveterate morphine or cocaine eaters, do the people, the sanitarians and majority of physicians untriedly cry out that the alcoholic drinks that are constantly creating so many thousands of ruined and dangerous habitual drinkers are poisons dangerous to the public health and morals, and therefore to be added to the statutory list of prohibited poisons. Not at all. Instead of recognizing the alcoholic liquor as a poisonous drug, thus directly dangerous and destructive to both mental and physical health, and demanding its addition to the statutory list of inhibited poisons, and to be dealt with solely by the public health authorities and courts of justice, if referred anywhere it is to the general field of politics to be voted for or against at the next election.

That alcoholic liquors for sale and use, whether in saloons, dispensaries, and other licensed places, or clandestinely in local option or prohibited territory, constitute the agents most dangerous and destructive to human health, life and morals is demonstrated by their creating and perpetuating in our country alone many thousand drunkards, and as many thousand impoverished families. Their use is the direct and admitted cause of a large majority of the homicides, suicides, highway robberies, safe-blowers, holdups and other acts of violence reported daily in the public press. In the language found over the signatures of more than 1,000 of the more eminent physicians, both in this country and in Europe: "Experiments have demonstrated that even a small quantity of alcoholic liquor, either immediately or after a short time prevents perfect mental action, and interferes with the function of the cells and tissues of the body, impairing self-control by producing progressive paralysis of the judgment and of the will, and having other markedly injurious effects. Hence, alcohol must be regarded as a poison, and ought not to be classed among foods."

"Further, alcohol tends to produce in the offspring of drinkers an unstable nervous system, lowering them mentally, morally and physically. This deterioration of the race threatens us, and this is likely to be greatly accelerated by the alarming increase of drinking among women, who have been hitherto little addicted to this vice. Since the mothers of the coming generation are thus involved, the importance and danger of this increase cannot be exaggerated."

Alcohol has been proved to be just as much an anæsthetic or narcotic drug as is ether, chloroform, morphine or cocaine; and when taken into the living body it impairs every function, and, if repeated daily, also impairs every structural activity, muscular force, nerve force, heat force, vital or protoplasmic force, and the natural vital resistance to the influence of toxic agents and other causes of disease, in direct proportion to the quantity used, has been proved by the most varied and accurate methods of experimentation by men eminent in the profession, both in Europe and America. That it is the poison most dangerous to the public health and morals is abundantly proved by the number of its

victims who crowd our poorhouses, asylums for the inebriate and insane, police stations, and prisons, and the constantly increasing number of homicides, suicides, and crimes of violence committed directly under the influence that are daily reported in the public press. To my mind, there is no more obvious or easily demonstrated proposition than that which assigns the uses of alcoholic liquors and their control to the departments of public health and morals, instead of the every varying and inefficient field of politics.

In claiming that alcohol as it exists in fermented and distilled liquors is a dangerous and most destructive poison, to be legally declared such, and to be sold only on legally qualified physicians' prescriptions, and plainly labeled "Poison," we will doubtless be told that "In moderate doses it is a tonic," and "a conservator of tissue and therefore a food," and "a poison only in large doses or too frequently repeated."

In other words, that "it is its abuse that causes all the evil and not its temperate use." But is not the fact that our almshouses, hospitals, asylums, and prisons are kept constantly filled with its ruined and dangerous abusers, all of whom commenced on so-called temperate doses, sufficient evidence that any doses if repeated from day to day are dangerous, both to the individual and the community? Does the daily use of bread, meat, or potatoes or any other article of ordinary food convert one-half of those who use it into either paupers or criminals; or has anyone ever been found abusing the use of bread or meat to such an extent as to convert them into either habitual paupers or criminals? Again, when it is found that so temperate a dose as a single mug of beer, or a glass of wine, or one drink of whisky, perceptibly lessens mental activity and self-control, retards the transmissions of impressions by the nerves, diminishes muscular strength, impairs the corpuscular elements of the blood and the nerve cells of the brain as seen under the microscope, retards tissue metabolism and excretion of waste products, and increases the liability to attacks of all infectious diseases, are not these indubitable evidences of a poison, which, if repeated from day to day, would endanger both health and morals?

The same methods of investigation when applied to ether, chloroform, morphine or cocaine and to the whole field of etiology in the laboratories of chemistry, physiology and bacteriology are fully credited and readily acted upon. Then why not in reference to alcoholic liquors? The answer is twofold. First, because the effect of alcohol in diminishing the sensibility of the brain directly destroys the ability of the user to judge correctly concerning his own ability or the nature of his impressions; and the second is because human greed for the pecuniary profits of the manufacture and sale of alcoholic liquors outweighs the regard for human welfare. So long as the contest can be kept in the field of politics these reasons will prevent anything more than temporary or partial success. But if it could be fully transferred to the departments of public health and morals, aided by the courts, a fair degree of success would soon result. I do not say that the success would be complete, because no penal laws have entirely suppressed the crimes against which they were enacted. The most efficient laws against murder, theft, adultery, etc., have existed since human history began, and yet these crimes continue to be committed, but far less frequently than they would be if instead of laws for direct suppression they were regulated by licensing designated persons to do all the killing, stealing, etc., on consideration of the payment of from \$100 to \$500 into the public treasury annually.—Dr. N. S. Davis, Eminent American Physician.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

Mixing politics with religion is not good, but religion is a good thing to mix with politics, especially if the religion be good and the politics bad.

Franklin, Tenn., has a committee of 25 which is watchful in suppressing the liquor traffic. Having learned that the courthouse was used as a storage place for liquor the sheriff was formally requested to abate the nuisance.

At Lawrence, Kan., the state university is located. No saloons there. What is the result? Last year not a single case of discipline was necessary, nor has there been a single case of drunkenness among the 1,250 students in attendance at the university.

The Finnish National Brothers' Temperance association has just held its meeting in Ishpeming, Mich. The organization is established in 22 states. It was organized in 1888 and now has a membership of about 13,000. One feature of the convention was a concert, the proceeds of which were devoted to the Finnish college at Hancock.

A Liquor Organ's Advice.

Truth, liquor organ, Detroit, says: "The trend of public sentiment in this decade is against the liquor trade, and when the trade realizes this fact and confines its efforts entirely to protecting what they now have and banishing thoughts of what they would like, the better it will be for all."